Workers of the World, Unite !

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Vol. XIII - No. 38 | NEW YORK, N. Y., MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1949 | PRICE: FIVE CENTS

Attempt to Smash Bell Strike with Mass Arrests

BULLETIN

BUFFALO, Sept. 13 — Ten leaders and participants in the bitterly-fought Bell strike here today surrendered to the police who have been hunting them for several days on frameup charges resulting from clashes on the Bell picket line last week. The unionists were released on $5,000 bail each, after which their bargaining committee went to the first meeting held with the company in two months. The negotiations, resumed under state and federal mediation agency sponsorship, were attended by UAW Vice-President John Livingston.

BUFFALO, Sept. 12 — Niagara County authorities working in collusion with the Bell Aircraft Corporation began a series of mass arrests of striking Bell workers and their leaders on a scale unheard of on the Niagara Frontier. The arrests were carried out with the consent and connivance of Gov. Thomas E. Dewey and were heralded by a concerted press and radio attack on the undaunted strikers and their union.

As these lines are being written, deputy sheriffs are still continuing the hunt for unionists in all of Niagara and Erie County. More than 35 unionists have been arrested. Almost all of them were pulled in late last week and held incommunicado, some without bail and some without any charges. The Niagara County District Attorney in a public statement issued to the press openly boasted that he would seek to set the bail so high that the union wouldn't be able to get them out. Once the leaders and activists were in jail he asserted than the strike could be taken care of.

UNITED LABOR SUPPORT

The action of the District Attorney and Sheriff Becker followed upon the heels of two mass demonstrations carried out on behalf of Local 501 at the Bell gates last Wednesday and Thursday following a call by the United Labor Defense Committee composed of the CIO, AFL and IAM. This committee, set up by organized labor in Buffalo, moved into action when it became apparent that Bell's union-busting drive endangered the entire local labor movement.

The two demonstrations had been eagerly awaited by the Bell strikers as the only answer to the company's provocative scab-herding efforts to break the backbone of the 14-week old strike. The company had been organizing vigilante groups to terrorize the strikers and coerce them to scab.

In addition, it armed hundreds of office and technical employees as well as strikebreakers with blackjacks and other weapons. The long expected showdown between the company and the union came early Wednesday morning when hundreds of unionists from all over the Niagara Frontier massed at the Bell gates in a challenge to the scabs to run the gauntlet of the massed picket lines.

Twelve busloads of office employees and scabs bound for the plant halted some distance from the plant to await a police escort. They approached the plant with intent to crash the picket lines.

(Continued on Page 4)

Kutcher to Tour Midwest Centers Starting Sept. 24

Following his successful visit to the West Coast, James Kutcher will fly to Chicago Sept. 24, where he will begin a tour of the key cities of the Middle West during October and November. Kutcher will remain in the Chicago area for two weeks. During that period he will make a visit to Milwaukee.

On Oct. 9 the legless veteran will travel to Flint, Mich., where arrangements are being made for him to address several of the largest UAW locals. He will proceed to Detroit the following day where he will stay for two weeks.

The Detroit Kutcher Civil Rights Committee is developing extensive plans for Kutcher's visit. He will speak before many important CIO unions, to university and other audiences. On Oct. 24 Kutcher will go to Toledo for his first stop in Ohio. The remainder of his tour will take him to Cleveland, Akron, Youngstown, Pittsburgh and Buffalo.

NEXT LEGAL STEPS

Kutcher will be accompanied by George Novack, national secretary of the Civil Rights Defense Committee, while he is in Chicago. They will hold consultations with M. J. Myer, attorney in charge of Kutcher's appeal, on the next legal steps to be taken in his case.

A complaint challenging the constitutionality of the whole "loyalty purge" and calling upon the federal courts to rescind Kutcher's discharge because of his political beliefs and restore his job in the Veterans Administration will shortly be filed by his lawyers.

U.S. YUGOSLAVS PROTEST CAMPAIGN AGAINST TITO

A number of organizations composed of Americans of Yugoslav origin have issued strong condemnations of the Cominform campaign against Yugoslavia, according to an Aug. 26 dispatch from Tanjug, the Yugoslav news agency.

In Chicago, the dispatch reports, several groups have joined together in adopting a resolution which states in part:

"We salute the struggle now being carried on by the peoples of Yugoslavia, as well as the efforts they are making in the building of socialism. We are firmly convinced that the peoples of Yugoslavia know Yugoslav conditions best and no one has the right to set himself up as their mentor. We are similarly convinced that the peoples of Yugoslavia and their leaders desire full collaboration with all their neighbors, collaboration which is just and profitable to all."

The resolution also condemns all whose who "directly or indirectly are sabotaging the building of socialism in Yugoslavia" and the papers **Narodni Glasnik, Slobodna Retch** and the Canadian **Jedinstvo** for printing inaccurate and false reports about Yugoslavia. The resolution was signed by:

Gouditch, secretary of the Croat Union of South Chicago; Vladislav Charitch, president of the "Matija Goubetz," section of the Croat Fraternity of South Chicago; Ivan Beyo, president of the "Jadranska Straja" Club; S. Barechitch, treasurer of the Croat Union; Marian Goutch, president of the "Imotski" Club of South Chicago; Znaver, president of Section 275 of the Croat Fraternal Community of South Chicago; and 58 other Yugoslav-Americans.

Another declaration was issued by the delegates of eight Croat organizations in South Chicago, including the International Workers Order and four sections of the Croat Fraternal Community. It said in part:

THE SAME METHODS

"The hostile campaign carried on against the peoples of the new Yugoslavia is reminiscent of the counter-revolution which the international imperialists organized after October against the Soviet Union, against which they also decreed an economic blockade. Today the same method and the same slogans are being used against Yugoslavia by all those who were themselves at one time exposed to a similar pressure from the side of imperialism.

"We appeal to all democratic Americans of Yugoslav origin to oppose the incitement of hate against the heroic people of Yugoslavia, to condemn the splitting role of the organizers of the anti-Yugoslav campaign, to unfold a defense of [Yugoslavia's] just cause. . . We appeal to our peoples in the USA to furnish, today more than ever, morai aid to the peoples of the new Yugoslavia."

In New York City the members of the social club Chibenik adopted a resolution saying: "Fourteen months have passed since the publication of the resolution of the Information Bureau, and having taken into account everything that it contains and everything that has been written after its appearance, **we come to the conclusion that it is a falsehood, consisting of accusations in bad faith and brutal interference in the internal affairs of the new Yugoslavia."**

Truman's Steel Board Deals Blow at CIO 'Fourth Round'

What Dewey Wants to Whitewash

Shown above is an example of the kind of "protection" provided by Governor Dewey's cops at the Sept. 4 Robeson concert near Peekskill. A witness of this scene, James L. Hicks, reporter for the Afro-American, said: "I saw Jean Bullard, first colored aviator in World War I and holder of the French Croix de Guerre, knocked down at my feet and brutally kicked and beaten by State troopers as he lay on the ground because he spat back at an anti-Robeson veteran who had spit in his face." The cops later forced the concert-goers into an ambush where hundreds were injured by rock-throwing hoodlums.

NOT ONE CENT GRANTED BY "FACT-FINDERS"

Truman's steel "fact-finding" board has done a hatchet job on the demands of the CIO United Steel Workers. The board's report, issued Sept. 10, gives the steel workers exactly nothing during the current contract term which expires April 30, 1950.

Accepting the phony "economics" arguments of the steel monopolists, the board denied the union's demand for a 12½-cent hourly general wage increase. It recommended that the workers get not one red cent.

The board also rejected the union's demand for a uniform pension of $125 per month at retirement age of 65, financed by the companies at a rate of 11.23 cents an hour per worker. It likewise denied the union's demand for health and welfare insurance financed by the companies to the amount of 6.27 cents per hour per worker.

MAXIMUM RECOMMENDED

Instead, the board recommended company-paid pension and insurance benefits not to exceed a combined total cost of 10 cents an hour per employee, including such benefits as are already being paid by the companies. The estimated actual cost, based on the maximum "general" recommendation, would be between seven and eight cents per hour per worker.

However, these recommendations "are not intended to apply automatically to individual companies," states the report. It places a top ceiling of 10 cents total on what the union may now seek in individual negotiations with each company. But it leaves the companies free to whittle the recommendations down to a minimum. Whatever the companies finally agree to, the report does not even suggest that they pay any benefits until after March 1, 1950.

Thus, the board's recommendations boil down to a wage freeze and a complete rejection of a "fourth round" increase, plus an endorsement of the principle of social insurance and pensions financed solely by the companies. But the union must still fight out in separate negotiations with every company the exact amount — not to exceed the 10-cent total — which the companies will actually pay for insurance and pensions, the amount and kind of benefits the workers will get, when such benefits will go into effect, etc.

In short, the report places an obligation on the union not to press for more than the most meager concessions. But it fixes no clear obligations on the individual companies to make specific concessions.

The board's recommendation has been ballyhooed as a "ten cent package," including a four-cent an hour insurance plan and six cent an hour pension plan. The report itself states, however, that "our rough estimate is that the net result would be about 8 cents an hour."

Where pension or insurance plans are already in effect, the report specifically proposes an increase sufficient only to bring the total up to the board's recommendation. "The recommended net cost is meant to be the **total** cost, not a cost in addition to what any company is now incurring. . ."

UAW President Walter Reuther (standing) discusses the steel report with CIO President Philip Murray in Pittsburgh.

Moreover, the report explicitly states that the 10-cent figure is a **maximum.** Any insurance plan, it states, "should be limited in net costs to a **maximum** of about . . . 4 cents an hour," and pensions "should be limited . . . to a **maximum** of about . . . 6 cents an hour."

The report thus establishes a low ceiling above which benefits may not go, but gives no recommended figure around which negotiations can take place. It

(Continued on page 2)

Strike Still Looms; Bosses Yield Nothing

By Art Preis

Through his steel "fact-finding" board, Truman has leveled a crippling blow at the "fourth round" wage drive of the CIO. The board's report rejects any wage increase for the CIO steel workers and urges a wage freeze for all industry.

The board coupled its ban on wage increases with a statement of economic doctrine that has disastrous implications for all future wage demands of labor. The board denied that higher profits and productivity justify higher wages.

That the report as a whole is a major setback for the unions is indicated, in part, by the unconcealed jubilation voiced by the steel barons and the capitalist press. The **N. Y. Times,** organ of the Morgan financial interests which control U. S. Steel Corp., greeted the Truman steel report as a "statesmanlike and intelligent document," a sentiment echoed by the entire Big Business press and reflected in the immediate response of the Stock Exchange.

MURRAY ACCEPTS

Philip Murray, president of both the CIO and the United Steel Workers, had committed the union in advance to accept anything the board proposed, no matter how meager. He promptly accepted the board's report because it contained a sop by way of a recommendation for company-financed health insurance and pensions at a miserably low level.

But in spite of the steel union leadership's eagerness to settle even for this sop rather than lead a militant fight for the union's full justified demands, the possibility of a steel strike still remains.

U. S. Steel, Republic Steel and other big corporations which dominate the industry have refused to concede even this mite. They have termed the proposal for insurance and pensions financed solely by the companies a "revolutionary doctrine" and "socialistic," although these same companies are paying 20 cents a ton royalty on coal from their captive mines to provide the United Mine Workers members a retirement pension of $125 a month — double what Truman's board recommends for the steel workers.

The steel companies have turned down Murray's offer to indefinitely postpone the strike scheduled for Sept. 25 if the corporations agree to accept the board's recommendations merely as "a basis" for settlement. There appears not the slightest disposition on the part of the companies, now that Truman's board has given them so much, to yield even the picayune concessions proposed by the board to avoid a strike. The steel bosses have reminded Truman that at the start of the steel hearings he assured them that they were in no way bound to accept the board's recommendations.

If the steel workers are now forced to strike, they enter the

(Continued on Page 4)

STRUGGLE OVER "LOYALTY" ISSUE DOMINATES NMU-CIO CONVENTION

By R. Bell

NEW YORK, Sept. 14—Witch-hunt, "loyalty" pledge and purge, was the keynote struck by President Joseph Curran in opening the CIO National Maritime Union convention in this city last Monday. Loyalty to the capitalist government was the issue on which the delegates would be called to "stand up and be counted," thundered Curran. Pledge cards were circulated among the delegates binding them to support the officials in expelling all "communists" from the union.

With the stage thus set for a red-baiting "blitzkrieg" intended to stampede the convention, Curran opened the afternoon session with a request to suspend the rules to permit the introduction of a "special" resolution. In his introductory remarks, Curran asserted that in the past the NMU had been known as a "disloyal" union, sometimes justly and sometimes unjustly. His resolution, he declared, was designed to establish the fact that the NMU was now a "loyal" union.

Without knowing the exact contents of the resolution, the opposition was immediately aware of its intent. Taken together with Curran's remarks about compelling each delegate to "stand and be counted," the so-called resolution was obviously nothing more than a replica of the "loyalty oath" which the membership had rejected recently by referendum vote. With the opposition alert to the maneuver, the Curran forces were unable to muster the necesary two-third vote to suspend the rules and the resolution was held in abeyance.

There is not another labor bureaucrat in the country who has attempted to go as far as Curran in introducing into the union the vicious "loyalty" oath and witch-hunt measures devised by the employers to split, undermine and destroy the organized labor movement. It seems as though he is driven by a deep-seated "guilt" complex. For almost ten years, Curran was a Stalinist fellow-traveller supporting every twist and turn in the Communist Party line. Under his leadership the NMU became the most Stalinized union in the country.

During that period, Curran over and over again demonstrated his "loyalty" to the policies of the Kremlin. Since his break with Stalinism he has executed a 180 degree turn to become one of the most outspoken of the "loyal" supporters of the reactionary clique who head the American State Department. In his new role Curran is frantically concerned with proving his "new" loyalty and erasing the stigma of past association.

In all this mumbo-jumbo about "loyalty" and "disloyalty" the question arises: Loyal to whom? Loyalty to the Kremlin means subordinating the interests of the workers to the foreign policy and diplomatic maneuvering of the Moscow bureaucrats. "Loyalty" to the capitalist government at home means abandoning the struggle for wages, hours and conditions for seamen aboard American vessels.

The first loyalty of a labor leader should be to the men he represents, that is, to the union

(Continued on page 4)

Dewey to Probe Mob Victims, Not Hoodlums

By Albert Parker

The most important aftermaths to the mob attack on the second Robeson concert near Peekskill were:

1. Governor Dewey ordered a grand jury investigation, whose main aim is obviously to fix blame for the assault on the sponsors of the concert and to outlaw their attempts to defend themselves against such violence in the future.

2. Some of the liberals adopted a "plague on both your houses" attitude, denouncing more or less equally the victims and perpetrators of the fascist attack and, like Dewey, condemning the victims for seeking to defend themselves.

3. Reactionaries began to peddle the idea that the way to prevent repetitions of Peeskill is by banning meetings which fascist elements might want to break up.

Dewey had been flooded with protests against the aid given the hoodlums by state and county officials and police, and with demands that they be investigated and punished. He replied by completely exonerating the guilty officials and by appointing one of them, District Attorney Fanelli, to launch an "inquiry" into the motives and protective measures of the concert sponsors.

A grand jury will be set up to study whether the concert was sponsored for the "purpose of deliberately inciting disorder"; "whether it was part of the Communist strategy to foment racial and religious hatred"; and whether the defense guard at the concert was "a quasi-military force." Dewey himself said that "Communist groups obviously did provoke" the violence, and he compared the defense guard to the Bund and the Ku Klux Klan. He said Fanelli was put in charge because he promised to proceed "promptly, vigorously and impartially."

LIBERALS AID REACTION

Even before Dewey acted, a similar position was taken by such liberals as the **New Republic,** one of the chief supporters of the Fair Deal. The concert-goers, its Sept. 12 issue admitted, "were exercising their constitutional right to assemble peacefully. On the other hand, their advance statements had been so provocative that they came close to incitement to riot, and many of the men who came in chartered buses from New York City . . . carried clubs and were deployed with military precision by their leader, a former Army officer."

In other words, according to the New Republic, the targets of the rocks at Peekskill must share some of the blame with the hoodlums who threw those rocks. Moreover, no "provocative" statements must be made in reply to reactionary conspirators who openly announce their intention to violate the "constitutional right to assemble peacefully." And above all, there can be no toleration for workers who organize to defend themselves and that constitutional right.

The evident logic of this position is that the workers should turn the other cheek to the hoodlums and place all their reliance on the "law-enforcement" agencies for the defense of their constitutional rights. The blood that was spilled at Peekskill — with the aid of those same "law-enforcement" agencies — testifies to the fact that this position benefits only the fascist hoodlums. Implied also in the **New Republic** viewpoint is the concept that the government should take steps against both sides in such situations as prevailed at Peekskill.

Utterances of this kind from the **New Republic,** which has a reputation for liberalism and reflects the opinions of the ADA wing of the Democratic Party, are helpful only to such reactionary apologists for the hoodlums as Dewey, who can boast that he is only proceeding in accord with the wishes of the liberals.

Meanwhile, opponents of free speech were using the Peekskill assaults as ammunition for further suppression of free speech. In Pittsburgh, where sponsors of an Oct. 15 Robeson rally had applied for permits to meet in a high school, American Legion leaders demanded that city and school officials ban the rally on the ground that: "We want no Pittsburgh incidents to be added to the Peekskill incident." The officials, reported to be impressed by this argument, promised to consider the applications "carefully."

The acceptance of the Legion position by government officials in Pittsburgh and elsewhere would constitute a genuine triumph for the pro-fascist forces. Under such a precedent, free speech would be outlawed in the name of preventing violence against free speech, and the hoodlums would be relieved — by the "democratic" government — of the risks involved in trying to throttle free speech by their own efforts.

Another variation of this danger was illustrated in Cincinnati, where a civil rights rally had to be called off when a hotel cancelled its reservation and no other hall could be rented because their owners feared "disturbances" would take place. (Incidentally, the hall owners, after reading about Peekskill, took the realistic position that "police protection" was no guarantee against such "disturbances.")

SWP Petitions Filed In New York City

NEW YORK, Sept. 15 — Nominating petitions for the four Socialist Workers Party candidates in the municipal elections were filed this week. Over 10,000 signatures were submitted, far exceeding the required minimum of 7,500. The SWP candidates are Michael Bartell for Mayor, Harry Ring for Controller, Gladys Parker for President of City Council, and Harold Robbins for President of the Borough of Manhattan.

"Fact-Finders" Grant Not One Cent

Labor Union Trends

The Mohawk-Valley Formula in 1948-49

By Bert Cochran

The desperate fight of the Bell Aircraft strikers at Buffalo to save their union gives the score on the distance traveled by Big Business towards bringing back "the good old days." The young generation of unionists who joined up during or since the war doesn't remember how hard it used to be to win strikes in the past.

In truth, the history of the American labor movement is a history of bitterly fought battles against superior odds; where the workers, without adequate leadership, without the large-scale solidarity that alone could have ensured their success, were scattered time and again like chaff before the remorseless combination of the capitalists, their private armies of thugs, the prostitute press and the minions of "law and order." The record of labor defeats is written in the bloody encounters of Homestead in 1892, the Pullman strike of 1894, the Ludlow Massacre in 1914, the steel strike of 1919, the railroad shopmen's strike of 1923 and hundreds of others too numerous to mention.

The CIO ushered in a new day. The massive picket lines, the readiness of the workers to fight it out, the magnificent solidarity that put into practice the old slogan that "an injury to one is an injury to all," the modern strike techniques and will to victory brought the barons of industry to terms. Gone was the day when the rich could divide the workers and push them, whipped and scared, back into the open shops.

COCKEYED NOTIONS

The epochal victories of the early CIO days and the solid union organizations that were established in the major industries as a result of them gave birth to a lot of cockeyed notions about the possibilities of harmony between labor and capital. The leadership of the new CIO unions hardened into a bureaucratic crust that held down militancy in the ranks and began thinking in terms of love feasts with the employers. Picket lines and militant actions were supposed to be "outdated." Labor was now going to receive its due in polite conferences where well-dressed gentlemen on both sides of the table would exchange experiences, match statistics and arrive at equitable settlements. So dreamed the well-heeled knaves and fools who now fancied themselves labor statesmen.

Unfortunately for them the people who own the industries and the banks don't take seriously the propaganda swill they hand the workers. They use reactionary or stupid labor leaders, or both, to soften up the ground for them, get the workers balled up and divided, throw out the militants and radicals and weaken the unions. But after all this has been accomplished, they don't sit down and offer wage increases and improved working conditions to the "labor statesmen." No. They start taking things back. They push their offensive a step further. And where they think the situation is ripe, they move in for the kill.

And that is the way it has come about that strikes are being lost again in America today; that the unbeatable solidarity of a decade ago is often not in evidence; that self-confidence has given way to pessimism and fear. The capitalists have softened up the ground sufficiently that they dare again to practice the Mohawk-Valley formula, dare again to try to smash unions and strikes in head-on assault.

ANTI-UNION PATTERN

The bosses first tasted blood in the Allis-Chalmers strike of 1946 in Milwaukee. They figured that the red-baiting had isolated the local Stalinist leadership to the point where it could not get the help of its union opponents for the strike. The company was not mistaken. The local Reuther-Murray crew, in their factional blindness and irresponsibility, actually played ball with the employers and the Hearst press and made possible the shattering of a once powerful union.

By 1948 the employers' union-busting had been perfected into a pattern. Every place where they thought a union had been sufficiently undermined so it couldn't take the gaff, they moved in to break it. The 1948 roll includes busted strikes of the cable workers in New York, the Boeing Aircraft strike in Seattle, the Bucyrus-Erie strike in Evansville, the Univis Lens strike in Dayton, the Di Georgio farm strike in California, the Fairchild Instrument strike in Long Island, the Standard Oil strike on the West Coast, and last but not least, the national packinghouse strike.

It will be noted that I refrain from discussing here the rail and coal strikes of late 1946 where the unions retreated under the full array of federal government strikebreaking. I am talking here of more or less ordinary trade union strikes and the employers' renewed ability to "treat 'em rough."

TWO ASPECTS

Two things stand out in the latest strategy of the industrialists. First is the financial strength of the corporations and their attainment of a large measure of inter-company teamwork during strikes which enables them to starve out the workers for long periods of time. The Allis-Chalmers strike lasted over a year. The Boeing strike 144 days. The Di Georgio farm strike over a year. The oil strike four months. The Fairchild strike five months. The packinghouse strike 10 weeks.

Second, their ability to recreate the anti-labor atmosphere of pre-CIO days and to trot out again their old union busting practices. And what is most serious of all — the bosses were able to give the strikers the works without other sections of the labor movement rushing in to the aid of their beleaguered comrades.

The CIO big shots were unconcerned about the strike defeats at first because they occurred in Stalinist-led unions. As a matter of fact, the local Murrayites were inclined to sabotage these strikes. They swallowed the boss propaganda that management would never treat unions under "legitimate" leadership in the same way. But then came the Boeing strike led by the conservative IAM leadership and the packinghouse and oil strikes. Where were the labor leaders now?

Sure, Murray wrote a letter asking the CIO affiliates to give "moral and financial aid" to the oil strikers, and in the case of the packinghouse strike, if I am not mistaken, the steel union actually voted a sum of money out of its treasury. But when a strike is in a bad way it needs something more than just "moral and financial" backing. It was discovered that you cannot witch-hunt one day and expect to get enthusiastic strike support the next day.

HAVEN'T LEARNED YET

You would think that these experiences would have a sobering effect on the labor leaders, certainly in the CIO, and make them adopt a more aggressive policy. But it didn't work out that way. The ties that bind them to the capitalist status-quo are obviously made of strong materials. The labor bureaucrats cannot and will not change except in those cases and periods when an embattled rank and file forces them to go along.

1949 unfortunately didn't see the labor leadership mending its ways but rather continuing and deepening its narrow-minded and self-defeating course. We are witnessing again the discouraging spectacle of old, well-established locals losing strikes, workers trooping back to work on the company's terms demoralized and cowed, and thousands of others drawing the lesson that strikes don't pay. In late June of this year the Bendix workers in South Bend, belonging to one of the oldest locals of the UAW, called off a 71-day strike without any gains.

At the same time Local 108 of the CIO rubber union called off a 43-day strike at the Dryden Rubber Company of Chicago on the company's terms, which included the dismissal of their local union president and four others who had been arrested on the picket lines. The CIO chemical outfit called off on July 25 a 77-day strike against three plants of the National Carbon Company at Niagara Falls, N. Y., without any gains and with 28 of its fired workers still out on the street. An AFL union ended a 5-week strike in August against the Eagle-Pitcher Mining and Smelting Company in Miami, Oklahoma, by accepting pay cuts of 16 cents an hour for miners and up to 30 cents an hour for machine operators.

The employees of the Singer Manufacturing Company of Elizabeth, N. J., are still out after almost five months fighting to abolish the very piece work system that their Stalinist leaders introduced during the war. And the Bell Aircraft workers after 14 weeks continue to battle with their backs to the wall after foolishly having fallen for the company baloney that if they only ousted their militant local leaders and elected a more conservative bunch to office good relations could be established on the labor-management front.

BATTLES COMING

It needs no prophet to foretell that these company victories are making the plutocrats more cocky and with a few more lost strikes under their belt they will feel that the time is ripe to try out Girdler's tactics on the rubber, auto or steel workers. Certainly the packinghouse strike gave warning of this. The clouds gathering on the horizon augur not class peace in America but class war.

This sorry record of defeats proves that the official labor leaders have dragged the workers' movement back a considerable distance. But don't let's lose our perspective because of this. The defeats are still mainly local in character. Neither Murray nor Green, nor their lieutenants can hurl labor back to the conditions of 1933. The basic structure of the unions still remains. The union consciousness of the workers is still high. Even the packinghouse workers, after having to take on by themselves the full fury of the capitalists' attack, have come back in a big way and rebuilt their organization to original strength.

We may and probably will see more setbacks and defeats. But these experiences are again changing the thinking of workers, knocking out of their heads a lot of sappy ideas that have been spread about labor-management partnership and putting the iron in the souls of the most intelligent and independent. I am convinced that we are going to see many of the local "office administrator" union leaders replaced in the next period by fighters. We are going to see the prestige of the international heads go down. We are going to see new militant groupings arise, gather strength and ready the ranks for big battles once again.

(Continued from page 1)

merely urges the union and the individual companies to NEGOTIATE the exact amount of benefits, if any, below the ceiling.

FREE HAND FOR BOSSES

In addition, the report gives the companies a free license to tear the board's "maximum" down to a minimum. Its recommendations, says the board, are based on evidence relating to 19 leading companies "as a group" and "do not necessarily reflect the circumstances of any individual company" and "are not intended to apply automatically to individual companies."

While the board slaps a sharply defined maximum on what the union may ask, it states only "a presumption" that the recommendations should apply to the 19 leading companies. And "in spite of this presumption, there should be a return to collective bargaining in order to provide an opportunity to each company to prove that the considerations, conclusions and recommendations herein discussed are in fact not applicable to it."

Note that the negotiations are based on the "presumption" that only the companies, but not the union, are to have the further chance to prove a case differing with the recommendations.

Insofar as companies other than the 19 are concerned, the report by implication exempts them from its "presumption" and gives them an open invitation to resist the "maximum." These companies are urged to negotiate with the union "to ascertain what deviations, if any, should be made from the general recommendations."

ROOM FOR STALLING

About the only matter relating to insurance and pensions the board would not make negotiable is the maximum the companies should pay. Every other vital aspect of the question is thrown back into negotiations without recommendation.

"Among the matters which will have to be resolved in collective bargaining," says the report, "are these: Should the plan be handled through an insurance company or through a trust fund and how may the parties participate in the supervision; how shall the accrued liability for past service be treated; shall there be provision for employees retired through permanent disability below the age of 65; what shall be the minimum length of service to be eligible for pensions; shall the payments be proportioned to length of service or amount of income, or shall the pensions be at a flat amount; . . . how large should the benefits be in the light of the maximum cost stipulated?"

Here alone is endless room for the companies to stall and haggle.

HIT INDUSTRY BARGAINING

In a final section of its report, the board steps completely out of its original jurisdiction to strike a blow at the union's fundamental policy of industry-wide bargaining, although the industry is dominated by U. S. Steel and a few other big corporations. The board proposes that "the field ought to be re-examined," not only in steel but other industries, to see if "public interest" does not require a "modification" in the method of industry-wide bargaining.

This gratuitous proposal, made in response to the direct pressure of the companies during the hearings, aims at dividing the union's strength in negotiations, while the industry as a whole follows a predetermined policy laid down by the basic steel monopolies.

The board's recommendation on a wage increase was clearly designed as a blow to the whole CIO "fourth round" wage drive. In denying any wage increase to the steel workers, the board argues that any steel wage increase would set "a pattern to be followed in other industries" and this, the board claims, would have an "adverse effect on the whole economy." "In general it seems desirable at this time to stabilize the level of wage rates" — that is, freeze all wages.

The wage demand of the steel workers themselves is dismissed with a sweeping generalization that "there are no inequities of steel workers at present which require redress through a general wage increase. . ."

SEE "NO INEQUITY"

The board slashes at the wage demand from every angle. The steel workers not only are not suffering from an inequity "as compared with other industrial workers," but they are not suffering any inequity even **"as compared with the corporations themselves,** their stockholders and the consumers of steel."

This last claim — which will possibly amaze the steel barons even more than it does the steelworkers — is made in the face of profits figures cited in the report itself which prove the opposite. The report points out that the **admitted** net profits of the industry in 1948 were 89% higher than the 1940-41 lush period and in the first half of this year rose to 124% above the 1940-41 average.

It admits as "not controverted" the union's testimony that the industry's pre-war "break-even point" — that is, the lowest point of production at which it continues to make profits — was "at 45% of capacity." It tells how the industry by increasing its operations from 90% in 1948 to just 91% in the first half of 1949 netted a profits increase of 35%.

When the board finds that the steel workers suffer no "inequity" compared to what the corporations are raking in, it is no wonder that the steel industry spokesmen and leading industry-dominated newspapers in steel cities have hailed the report with jubilation.

FAR-REACHING MOVE

But the board, in its report, goes far beyond the immediate issues in dispute. It lays down far-reaching propositions on the economic factors involved in the wage question. These propositions are intended to demolish the basic premises upon which the CIO has built its "fourth round" demands and all subsequent wage demands.

The report dismisses out-of-hand the carefully documented facts of the Nathan report, on which the CIO case was built. The Nathan report attempted an analysis of the whole profit structure of the steel industry and the needs of the national economy. The companies correctly felt that through the Nathan report their whole top-heavy and bloated profit structure was being called into question. This was of especially grave concern to the steel monopolists.

The Truman board, aside from some mild criticism of the industry's case in order to preserve the appearance of "impartiality," concentrates a point-by-point attack on the Nathan report. It issues a sweeping and arbitrary denial of the specific facts on production and profits cited in the Nathan report.

For instance, the board claims that the Nathan report "has not succeeded in proving its contention" that steel productivity has increased 49.5% since 1939, although the Nathan report used for its authority the weighted index of production divided by man hours for Blast Furnaces, Steel Works and Rolling Mills as determined by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

PROFITS IGNORED

The board is forced to concede that steel profits are the highest on record, but it brushes over this fact with the bogus claim that "the prosperity of a volatile industry like steel and its ability to pay should be judged over a longer range." But for ten years the steel industry has shown a consistent vast increase in annual profits.

Similarly, the board dismisses, without contrary evidence, the union's figures showing the "break-even" point to be 32%. The board does concede, however, that the break-even point before the war, when production was at a far lower rate, was as low as 45% and cites the fact that in 1949 a mere increase of 1% in operations over 1948 increased the annual rate of profits by 35%.

But any way, says the board, the question of productivity and profits doesn't matter, because the board believes, that "wage rates in a particular industry should not be tied directly to productivity in that industry. . ." No matter how much more the steel workers produce and how much more profits the corporations get, this should not have any decisive bearing on wages, according to this truly fantastic report.

Who is to get the benefit of increased production? According to the board, the increased value of the products should go entirely to the useless and parasitic steel monopolists. And the same principle would apply to all other industries.

The report does not even mention the increasing factor of speedup, because Philip Murray himself did not raise this crucial question in his desire to completely evade any struggle over it. Nevertheless, the speedup worries the workers even more than other factors related to increased productivity because it is being accomplished through cutting of working forces.

Thus, the end product of the steel union's dependence on Truman's board rather than on its own independent militant struggle is a 100% defeat on wages, a recommendation for mere crumbs so far as insurance and pensions go and, decisive for the future, the government's enunciation of a doctrine that denies the relation of wages to the profits and productivity of the steel industry, however high these may be.

Longshore Talks Fail

Federal Mediator Cyrus S. Ching (left) announced complete failure of conferences in New York City to end 19-week Hawaiian dock strike. Ching is shown early in negotiations with Harry Bridges, president of the CIO Longshoremen's union, and Dwight C. Steel, representative of stevedoring companies.

WHY YOU NEED "The Militant"

America's leading socialist weekly gives you:

- The straight, unvarnished facts about the trends in politics, economics and social issues of vital importance to every thinking worker.
- Genuine Marxist analyses that explain in simple language the big events of our time and reveal their basic meaning.
- Uncompromising exposes of the profiteers and their political hatchet-men in high office.
- The inside story of many of the major happenings in the labor movement that make headlines.
- A fighting program to combat the evils of monopoly capitalism.

The Militant presents the revolutionary socialist answer to the advancing depression and mass unemployment, persecution of racial and political minorities, the menace of fascism, and the threat of atomic destruction in another world war.

- A heartening vision of the bright new world which scientific socialism foresees and a practical way of speeding its realization.

THE MILITANT
116 University Place
New York 3, N. Y.

I want to subscribe to **The Militant.** Enclosed is ☐ $1.00 for six months; ☐ $2.00 for one year.

Name .....

Street .....

City .....

State ..... Zone.....

World Events

By Paul G. Stevens

French Stalinists Fear Revolutionary Union Opposition

As we reported recently, the French Stalinists have been forced to loosen up somewhat on their anti-democratic control of the General Confederation of Labor. This is due to the rank and file workers' great dissatisfaction with their leadership and is meant as a safety valve. When the functioning of democratic procedure in the French unions leads to organized revolutionary opposition, however, the Stalinist bureaucrats quickly forget their new turn to trade union "democracy."

An illustration with considerable detail is dealt with by Gerard Bloch in a recent issue of **La Verite**, paper of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste, French section of the Fourth International. Bloch describes a conflict which has arisen between the Stalinist leadership and a number of CGT shop units of the great Michelin rubber works at Clermont-Ferrand, over their shop steward, Delange, who is a Trotskyist and a member of the revolutionary minority in the trade union federation.

Delange had been elected by his CGT fellow workers as a delegate to the Central Michelin Trade Union Council. But the Stalinists bureaucratically barred him after he wrote a signed article in the **Verite-Michelin**, the PCI factory paper in that plant.

In this article Delange had sharply criticized the CGT leadership for not taking action to form committees against the war in Indo-China, and for its wage policy. (The Stalinists call for increases on a graduated system, according to skills, while the minority demands a general increase in wages, in line with rising living costs.)

This bureaucratic action brought the Stalinists into conflict with the rank and file workers in the shops who had elected Delange. When the local CP trade union leader could not persuade membership meetings to budge from their support of Delange, he cried out that the CGT leaders would prefer to have the shop locals leave the federation and go independent rather than yield to the workers' demand that their democratically elected delegate be recognized.

Delange appealed against this outrage to R. Marchadier, secretary of the regional CGT federation and a member of the Central Committee of the CP. In an interview between the two, the Stalinist leader offered Delange a "deal." He would see to it that the conflict was resolved and Delange seated as a delegate, he said, if the latter would persuade his comrades to cease publication of the **Verite-Michelin.**

Naturally, the **Verite** reports, such a deal was inacceptable. But, it points out, the offer itself is revealing of what the Stalinists fear more than anything else — the formation of a revolutionary trade union opposition that can organize their eventual defeat.

* * *

Left Wing of Labor Party in Britain

Readers of **The Militant** have inquired for more information on **Socialist Outlook** and the Socialist Fellowship, representing the new left wing in the British Labor Party.

Socialist Outlook began publication last December. It is put out by the Labor Publishing Society Ltd., 6 Station Road, New Southgate, London N. 11, England. The Chairman of its Managing Committee is Jack Stanley, General Secretary of the Constructional Engineering Union. Associated with him have been a number of prominent Labor Members of Parliament, including Tom Braddock, Ronald Chamberlain, Mrs. E. Braddock, Stephen Swingler, as well as local Labor Councilors.

The paper, appearing monthly, takes a clearcut anticapitalist line in opposition to the "balanced economy" policy of the Labor Party leadership in the government, calling for complete nationalization of industry under workers' control. At the same time it is clearly anti-Stalinist. One of the features in its pages has been a running controversy between the well-known fellow-traveler Konni Zilliacus and regular contributors of **Socialist Outlook.**

The paper also minces no words about the character of the so-called "official left wing" in the Labor Government, represented by the Minister of Health, Aneurin Bevan. An article by its editor, John Lawrence, in the July issue takes Bevan to task for saying at a Labor demonstration during the Blackpool Conference of the Party, that "our people have achieved a material prosperity in excess of their moral stature." The editor comments:

"And he was not referring to Belcher [a Minister who recently resigned because of shady dealings in the notorious Sidney Stanley case] or to Lord Milverton [the "Labor" chairman of the Board of the Nationalized Docks, who demanded the suppression of the recent dock strike]. He was talking about our people. About the 'prosperity' of railwaymen on 92 shillings ($19) a week, etc.... We have had to take this kind of insult from the idle wasters of the ruling class in the past, but when it comes from one of our own people it is sickening and disgusting. And especially so when it comes from a man like Aneurin Bevan, who was at one time a working miner and who, thanks to the workers, has attained the real material prosperity of a Cabinet post with 5,000 pounds ($20,000) a year. What kind of moral stature can a man possess who can accuse those who lifted him into power, of having no moral stature?"

At the annual Labor conference in June, **Socialist Outlook** organized a public meeting which was attended by 160 people, most of whom were delegates to the conference. The meeting dealt mainly with the proposal of Ellis Smith, M.P., who had previously not been associated with this paper, to form a Socialist Fellowship for the organization of all the "genuine Socialists" within the party on a clearly defined socialist and anti-capitalist program.

The proposal was received with great enthusiasm, and a campaign to form Socialist Fellowship has been going on ever since, with organizational meetings being held throughout the country, addressed by various MP's and associates of **Socialist Outlook.**

THE MILITANT ARMY

Seattle Sub-getters Encouraged by Successful Campaign

Dan Roberts, reporting for the Seattle branch of the Socialist Workers Party, enclosed 11 subscriptions in his letter, the final batch in Seattle's campaign. "Our two-months subscription drive ended Labor Day," he writes; "and we exceeded our quota of 30 by six." This is an excellent record for a branch the size of Seattle and Dan says that the comrades "feel very good" about the results.

"Of the 36 subscriptions," he continues, "15 were obtained by door-to-door soliciting. That represents about 35 man-hours of work. The remainder are either renewals or new ones obtained from sympathizers whom we just never asked to subscribe before."

The Seattle sub-getters report that the "interest in our ideas is greater than the actual number of subscriptions would indicate."

The high scorers are **George F., 8; Dan R., 8; Marianne, 6; John,** 5; **Frank K.,** 2; **Clara,** 2; **Frank L., Sarah, Art B., Art S.,** and **Al,** one each.

The **Youngstown** branch of the Socialist Workers Party has started a subscription campaign, according to **H. B.** "We aim to concentrate on trade unionists and friends in an effort to build up subscriptions and widen the influence of **The Militant.** We intend to work hard and get the maximum."

Literature Agent **D. C.** of **St. Louis** tells us that unemployment has made sub-getting somewhat more difficult there than formerly; "however, I expect from time to time to send in subscriptions." **D. C.** keeps in close touch with **Militant** subscribers in the St. Louis area, a practice that helps maintain a stable circle of readers.

The **Flint** comrades recently initiated a campaign which we would like to call to the attention of some of the other branches. Raising the slogan. "Let's Pay Up Our Militant Bill," they set out to devise ways and means of clearing up the slate. This was not easy, writes Literature Agent **Olga Daniels,** "as workers are pulling their purse strings and their belts tighter and tighter. We finally decided to conduct a local fund drive and the check enclosed represents the first week's receipts."

The **New Britain** branch is likewise making a determined effort to bring their account up to date. **D. S.** sent in a sizable payment to help put New Britain in the category of those model branches that don't permit their literature bills to accumulate.

Our apologies to the **Milwaukee** branch. Last week Milwaukee was inadvertently left out of the scoreboard for August subscriptions. The four subs they sent in brought the total for all branches to 217 for August instead of the 213 that was reported.

Mrs. A. L. of **Minnesota** on renewing her subscription wrote us: "I am compelled to drop some of my magazines, among them **Readers Digest, Progressive World, Capper's Weekly, Coronet, Household** and **Newsweek;** but I am sending $2 to keep **The Militant** coming to my address." She asked us to send three extra copies of the Aug. 15 issue containing the article by Henry Johnson on "Egg and Butter Bonanza" and an extra copy of the Aug. 22 issue with the item on wheat "Not Going Anywhere." "Here in the egg basket state," she says, "eggs are 60c. or more a dozen; even farmers are not eating them." She was pleased to find in **The Militant** an expose of the egg and butter shortage artificially created by the Truman administration.

We might remind other readers of **The Militant** that extra copies of any issue containing articles of special interest for distribution to friends and shopmates can be obtained by simply writing in. The cost is only 3c. a copy if your order five or more.

H. S. of **Minneapolis** notified us of a change in his address and enclosed a dollar "to defray the cost" of making the change. The cost, of course, is much less than that, but we gratefully accepted the dollar as **The Militant** depends on voluntary contributions from its readers to meet the cost of publication.

H. S. writes: "My wife and I have been extremely busy this summer, and I have had little time to do any heavy reading. But we always find time to peruse **The Militant** and **Fourth International** and thus to keep abreast of current developments. The August issue of **Fourth International** is a classic. Both publications are an indispensable antidote to the swindle sheets."

SEND FOR
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

September issue:
WAS KARL MARX RIGHT?
Only 25c.
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
116 University Place
New York 3, N. Y.

Subscriptions: $2 per year; $1 for 6 months. Foreign: $3.50 per yr; $2 for 6 mos.
"Entered as second class matter Mar. 7, 1944 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of Mar. 8, 1879."

THE MILITANT
Published Weekly in the Interests of the Working People
THE MILITANT PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
116 University Pl., N. Y. 3, N. Y. (Phone: AL 4-9330)
Editor: GEORGE BREITMAN
Business Manager: JOSEPH HANSEN

Bundle Orders (5 or more copies): 3c each in U.S., 4c each in foreign countries.
Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent The Militant's policies. These are expressed in its editorials.

Vol. XIII - No. 38 Saturday, September 17, 1949

TROTSKY

"Reactionary epochs like ours not only disintegrate and weaken the working class and its vanguard but also lower the general ideological level of the movement and throw political thinking back to stages long since passed through. In these conditions the task of the vanguard is above all not to let itself be carried along by the backward flow: it must swim against the current. If an unfavorable relation of forces prevents it from holding the positions that it has won, it must at least retain its ideological positions, because in them is expressed the dearly paid experience of the past."

—Leon Trotsky, Stalinism and Bolshevism, 1937.

LENIN

Truman Unmasks Himself

The government's steel "fact-finding" board, which did the bidding of the steel corporations by rejecting any "fourth round" wage increases for the steel workers and proposing a wage freeze for all industry, was Truman's baby.

He conceived the idea of the board, he set it up and he handpicked its members. Undoubtedly he guided its deliberations and decisions from behind the scenes. And unquestionably he indicated the formula, issued by his board, designed to pare the steel union's demands almost to nothing and put a road-block before the whole CIO wage drive.

Truman, therefore, must take direct personal responsibility for this latest governmental blow at labor — one of the most damaging that the organized workers have suffered in years.

Since Truman's re-election last November, the labor movement has taken one blow after another. The Taft-Hartley Law remains unrepealed and in full force. The bill for upward revision of the minimum wage has been converted into a measure to deprive millions of even the protection they now have. The rent ceilings have been broken through. Civil rights legislation has been scuttled. In the witch-hunt atmosphere fostered by the government, the corporations and police have been emboldened to ride herd with force and violence over picketlines.

Up to now, the Trumanite labor leaders have been able to cover up Truman's responsibility for the reactionary trend. They blamed the Republican-Dixiecrat coalition in Congress. By pointing the finger at his political opponents, they diverted attention from Truman's willing compromises with the anti-labor forces in Congress and his failure to put up any kind of real fight for progressive legislation.

But they can't blame the "Republican-Dixiecrat Bloc" for the steel "fact-finding" board and its recommendations. They can't deny that Truman created this board, named its members and directed its decisions. Nor can they deny that these decisions are a knife in the very vitals of the "fourth round" wage campaign.

Truman stands exposed for what he is — a conscious agent of Big Business who has masked himself as a "friend of labor" the better to deceive and betray labor.

Lehman Gets Stalinist Aid

Left-handed support by the Stalinists for Herbert H. Lehman, the Democratic candidate for the U. S. Senate from New York, was assured on Sept. 13 when the State Committee of the American Labor Party formally decided not to name any candidate for that post in this year's election.

The ALP State Committee issued a statement admitting that Lehman "supinely endorses" the Truman-Dulles "tripartisan policy of war and empire." But by refusing to run a candidate of its own, the ALP in effect endorses Lehman as the "lesser evil" to Dulles.

Once again the Stalinists have demonstrated how little they can be depended on to oppose the politicians of Big Business. For the ALP State Committee is firmly controlled by the Communist Party and obeys its dictates on all important issues.

The alibi offered by the ALP leadership has an especially phony ring. Victory for the ALP municipal campaign, it said, "can be achieved only by following a policy of concentration. . . For the ALP to nominate a candidate for the United States Senate for the short term of only one year. . . would only detract from the policy of concentration and would only diffuse our strength from the important major objective of winning in the municipal campaign."

Someone might believe this fairy story only if he did not know that ALP boss Marcantonio and the Stalinists tried for months to persuade Henry Wallace to run for the Senate on the ALP ticket. It was only after Wallace resisted their pressure, turned down the bid and let it be known that he favored the election of Lehman, that the Stalinist "concentration" alibi blossomed forth.

This pretext is all the more hollow because the ALP has a regular place on the New York ballot, and had only to name a candidate instead of collecting petitions to qualify him for the ballot. Instead of "detracting" from the ALP's municipal campaign, the running of a Senatorial candidate would have provided a wider arena for the party's propaganda.

The unprincipled opportunism that led the Stalinists to bow to pro-Lehman sentiment among the Wallaceites and in their own ranks thus places them in the ridiculous position of opposing the Truman-Tammany candidate for Mayor while in effect aiding the Truman-Tammany candidate for U. S. Senator.

Made-to-Order "Recovery"

Truman's official campaign of "optimism" has gone into high gear. The administration's statistics factories in Washington have turned out a new batch of figures to conform with Truman's recent orders to the various departments to "talk business up."

The report of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, issued last week, had the capitalist newspapers singing "Bye, Bye Blues" in headlines like, "Jobs at 1949 Peak" and "Rise in Production First in 10 Months."

Much ado is made about the figures on unemployment and employment issued by the U. S. Census Bureau. According to the Bureau, employment in August rose to 59,947,000, or 227,000 above the July figure. At the same time, the Bureau claims, the number of jobless fell in one month by 406,000.

The best the Bureau could do to explain how employment could increase by only 227,000 while unemployment declined 406,000 was to claim that a lot of jobless youth had "left the labor market." Just where these young workers went when they suddenly "left the labor market" the Bureau chooses to leave a profound mystery.

Similarly, a reported slight rise in production during August fails, on close examination, to be the great "turn in the tide" that the headlines try to make it. The Council of Economic Advisers claimed industrial production "recovered" the 4% decline in July. This "recovery" we learn was mainly due to reopening of plants shut in July as part of "the spreading practice of plant-wide vacations."

But, as the Sept. 11 **N. Y. Times** admits in small type under its glowing headline about a rise in production, other indices, "however, presented a less favorable picture." For instance, if it was true that more people were employed in August than in July, the average number of hours worked per week was less. The average worker drew one hour less pay in August than in July.

The labor movement would be foolish to fall for Truman's trick of blowing up each slight and temporary rise either in production or employment as "recovery." There is no change in the fundamental factors of declining domestic mass purchasing power and world-wide capitalist economic instability, as reflected, for instance, in the British "dollar" crisis. To date, American capitalism and its government have offered nothing to remove these underlying factors of economic breakdown.

The unions should press more vigorously than ever for a broad program against unemployment. This program should include the 30-hour week at 40 hours pay; full-scale public works financed out of the present huge war appropriations; and a federal unemployment compensation system providing benefits equal to union wages for all jobless for the duration of their unemployment.

What Peekskill Signifies for Anti-Fascists

Why the Smiles?

Sir Stafford Cripps and Ernest Bevin try to put on a cheery front during their negotiations in Washington with Dean Acheson and John W. Snyder over the British "dollar" crisis. Mild optimism was also expressed as the negotiations ended, but the British left under greater pressure than ever before from their American "allies" to devalue the pound.

Peekskill 'Star' Insults Memory Of Revolutionary Patriots of '76

Two days after the second Peekskill hoodlum outrage against civil rights, the **Peekskill Evening Star** defended the bloody assaults on the Robeson concerts by likening the fascist-like rock-throwers to the American revolutionists who fought King George III.

"It may be that more good than harm will come from the two unpleasant incidents," says the paper which was loudest in inciting the two Peekskill assaults. "The Boston Tea Party was not in accordance with the then existing law, but historians agree that these patriots who participated focused attention on a great injustice and it could not have been done in any other manner."

What a foul insult to the memory of the heroes of the struggle for American independence. The patriots of the Boston Tea Party were dissenters and rebels, revolutionists hounded as "disloyal agitators" just as the "reds" are hounded today.

These revolutionists fought against tyranny and for democratic rights, for freedom of speech, press and assembly which they incorporated in the Bill of Rights of the American Constitution.

The Peekskill hoodlums were seeking to destroy the very Bill of Rights that the American revolutionists fought and died for.

The patriots of the Boston Tea Party risked their liberty and lives to make their demonstration for freedom. The "patriots" of Peekskill made their cowardly assault on defenseless people with the aid of the police and the moral sanction of the authorities, if not their active support.

The Peekskill "patriots" are more to be likened to the traitor tories who aided the British monarchy against the American revolutionists and who, when the British troops occupied an American city or town, denounced the patriots, set fire to their homes and even lynched them in the streets.

The editorial in the **Peekskill Evening Star** is enough to make old Sam Adams, revolutionary agitator and organizer of the Boston Tea Party, turn over in his grave.

By George Breitman

There is still no strong, distinctively fascist movement with a mass following in this country. But that has not prevented the capitalist class, through its government apparatus, from proceeding with the construction of a military-police state. By such devices as "loyalty" purges, "subversive" blacklists, persecution of the Stalinist leaders, etc., it has already taken long steps toward the regimentation of American political life.

The American Legion and other veteran groups that spearheaded the Peekskill assaults are not fascist organizations in the sense of the Italian and German storm troops; they can more precisely be described as traditionally reactionary groups, from which classic fascist movements make many of their recruits. Nevertheless, at Peekskill they were mobilized to fulfill essentially the same terrorist function as storm troops, and demonstrated beyond dispute that it is possible to have fascist action even in the absence of a distinctively fascist movement.

What does all this signify? That it would be wrong to expect the campaign to install an American police state to follow exactly the same lines as in Italy during the 20's and Germany during the 30's. That in the struggle over civil liberties it is considerably later than is realized by those people, including radicals, who console themselves on the ground that fascism has attracted only "crackpots" in this country. And that the main threat to democratic rights emanates from the "democratic" government, whose restrictive measures serve as model, inspiration and moral cover for Peekskill assaults.

STRIKING SIMILARITIES

Thus, although there are undoubtedly important differences between the development of American and European reaction, the similarities are even more striking. And none of these similarities is more alarming than the relationship between the "law-enforcement" agencies and the hoodlums.

Scores of historic parallels with Peekskill can be found in the brilliant book, **Fascism and Big Business**, by the French Marxist, Daniel Guerin. Describing how the fascist bands operated in Italy before Mussolini came to power, he notes that they had at their disposal "the material and moral support of the repressive forces of the state: police, carabinieri, and army. . . The guardians of 'law and order' had their orders to remain idle when the fascists attacked the 'reds' and to intervene only if the latter resisted."

Those were exactly the same orders the state police and deputy sheriffs had at Peekskill. They remained "idle" — that is, absent — during the breaking up of the first Robeson concert on Aug. 27, when the concert-goers were greatly outnumbered by the hoodlums.

And they intervened at the second concert on Sept. 4 when the concert-goers turned out by the thousands and were accompanied by a large defense guard of unionists and veterans able and willing to resist. The cops' intervention, as is well known, consisted of forcibly disarming the defense guard and of holding it back while the other concert-goers were forced to helplessly run a gauntlet of hoodlums throwing rocks and boulders.

ROLE OF COURTS

"The courts on their side," Guerin continues, "handed down 'centuries in prison for the anti-fascists and centuries of absolution for the guilty fascists.' In 1921, the 'Minister of Justice, Fera, 'sent a communication to the magistrates asking them to forget about the cases involving fascist criminal acts.'"

We are not aware of any similar communication from the New York State or U. S. Attorney Generals — but only because the judges, district attorneys and sheriffs in and around Peekskill did not require that kind of advice any more than a capitalist has to be reminded about his need to make a profit. The "law-enforcement" agencies were too busy guiding, protecting and apologizing for the hoodlums to even think about anything else.

That is the kind of atmosphere in which full-blown fascism breeds and thrives. Nor is this atmosphere at all dispelled by President Truman's statement at his Sept. 8 press conference that he thought Eleanor Roosevelt had covered the situation "perfectly and thoroughly" in her newspaper column. (Mrs. Roosevelt had written of the "mob lawlessness" at Peekskill as "disgraceful.")

But fascists least of all are likely to be impressed by pious presidential censures of "mob lawlessness" when they can see that no branch of the federal government intends to make the slightest effort to do anything about it. On the contrary, the fascist scum in all parts of the country have drawn new hope and confidence from Peekskill and new ideas about how to get away with murder of the Bill of Rights.

IRRESPONSIBLE VIEW

That is why it is necessary to denounce the Stalinists mercilessly for their irresponsible statements about the "tremendous victory for free speech" won at the second concert — the "victory" being that Robeson was able to sing then, unlike the previous week. (Sept. 11 Worker.)

And the Sept. 12 **Daily Worker** quotes approvingly from a statement by Leon Straus, a CIO Fur Workers official and leader of the Peekskill defense guard: "Despite the violence of the hoodlums at the end of the concert, the peaceful holding of the concert itself was a tremendous victory for American democracy. . .

"Sure there were casualties in this battle, and all those responsible must be made to pay for them. But the most important thing for union people all over is this — it was a battle which we won. They said no concert would be held in Peekskill. It was held. It was a success, a defeat for the fascists. . ."

Maybe the Stalinist leaders actually believe this ballyhoo; or maybe it represents an attempt to "inspire" and "pep up" their members and sympathizers. In any case, it is a thoroughly false estimate of what happened at Peekskill and can do only disservice to the struggle to mobilize united action against the threats of fascism and the "democratic" police state.

THEIR MAJOR AIM

What was really "the important thing" about Peekskill? Not that Robeson was able to sing, but that the hoodlums were able to stage their wave of terror — and get away with it. Everything else is incidental. There is not more free speech in Peekskill today as a result of Robeson's managing to sing; but there is less free speech because the terrorists demonstrated that they can with impunity assault those who exercise the right of free speech.

Fascism showed its face at Peekskill, and it was successful, not defeated, in its major aim. Any other interpretation — no matter what the motive for it may be — minimizes the urgency of the danger and weakens the campaign to overcome it. Neither phony optimism nor hand-wringing despair can be of help in the life-and-death struggle to preserve democratic rights in the United States.

'CIO News' Hits Concert Violence

The Peekskill assaults are strongly condemned in an article by Editor Allan L. Swim in the Sept. 12 **CIO News**. "Two things we must not attempt are to punish persons for what they think and try to beat ideas to death with legalistic clubs and mob action," the article concludes.

But beyond this article, no steps have been taken by any of the national CIO or AFL leaders to protest the Peekskill outrage, to denounce the complicity of the state and county officials in the mob assault, or to initiate measures to prevent similar fascist crimes.

Science, Freedom and the Bomb

By George Tobin

"CLEANLINESS IS A DUTY HERE. THEREFORE DO NOT FORGET TO WASH YOUR HANDS." (Sign posted by Nazi bosses on crematorium wall at Dachau Death-Factory, reported by Max Lerner in the **N. Y. Post.**)

"We cannot master the machine in the interest of the human spirit unless we have a . . . deep and abiding faith in human beings, which is a faith in the supreme worth of life." (David E. Lilienthal in the Aug. 6 **Saturday Review of Literature.**)

While you read this, Mr. Lilienthal's assembly lines are running at top speed, preparing the biggest mass murder the world has ever seen.

You are a working man or woman — all you want is some happiness, peace and security. You want decent homes, not bomb-craters. You are troubled. You know the scientists' warning: There is no secret to the basic principle of the A-Bomb. Everytime Truman, Lilinthal & Co announce a new improved streamlined model in production at Oak Ridge, you shudder to think that, in a few years or maybe months, the same or a better model will be rolling off the lines in Atomgrad, USSR! Your city is in line to be a super-Hiroshima, and the scientists all say no military defense is possible. You ask, "Is this the fruit of science?"

HARNESSING MACHINE

In his article, titled "Machines With and Without Freedom," Lilienthal tries to answer this question. He denies that modern science is a curse. Neither, says he, is it an unmixed blessing. "The machine and technology are neither good nor evil in themselves. . . It is the purpose for which the machine is used, and particularly the methods pursued in carrying out that purpose that determine whether technology is likely to further human well-being or to threaten it."

Perhaps you have thought about this problem. And concluded that the machine can indeed be used either for or against the people's welfare. But the troublesome point is this: **Just how can we harness the machine to serve and not destroy us?** If you are a revolutionary socialist you would say:

"That depends on **which class controls the machine.** The workers have built all this wonderful technology — but it has been taken from them, and is being used against them by a mad ruling class. When the workers wake up and take control of this machinery, then we shall use it for the good of mankind. We shall then produce food and homes, not famine and death. The workers want a decent life — not greater profits and conquest."

One would expect Lilienthal to deal with the bomb. Can human welfare be advanced by mass murder? Here you get from him — silence, disguised by a few glittering generalities. He writes:

"Unless the applications of research and technology are consciously related to a central purpose of human welfare, unless technology is defined and directed by those who believe in people and in democratic and ethical ends and means, it could be that the more research money we spend the further we miss the mark."

Have you ever seen greater hypocrisy? He and others like him have viewed with horror acts by other governments based on the rule that "the end justifies the means." Yet what justification do these moral citizens give for atomic mass killing — but this same idea, "the end justifies the means," in its most barbaric form?

The Trumans, Lilienthals and Hickenloopers are church-going men. They read in the Bible, "Thou shalt not kill." When this man in Camden, N. J., kills 13 people, everyone is horrified. That is homicide, a sin against God and a crime against the state — for which the killer, if sane, will be put to death. But when a QUARTER MILLION innocent men, women and babes, are atomized by one bomb — that, you see, is the ethical democratic American way of bringing culture, civilization, Christianity and a faith in the supreme worth of life to the heathen. . .

A few courageous men are protesting. They deny that the end of freedom can be served by such means as mass murder. Lewis Mumford, well-known author, writes in a letter in the July 3 **N. Y. Herald Tribune:**

"The American people have been committed . . . to a doctrine of war that is utterly repulsive. . . The exact term for this method of attack is genocide: a crime against humanity which, in the United Nations, we piously profess to abhor. . ."

Mumford then reports the opinions of some U. S. Air Force pilots who served in Germany, to the effect that strategic bombing differs in no essential from genocide as practiced in Nazi extermination camps.

By his position as boss in the Industry of Death, Lilienthal and the rest of the ruling class stand branded as war criminals, despite their talk about "the supreme worth of life."

This man, operating behind the greatest curtain of secrecy in history, writes of the "sacred and inviolable process" of putting "facts in the hands of the people." Mumford calls his bluff:

SINISTER CONSEQUENCES

"Congress blindly votes appropriations for unspecified weapons in unspecified amounts to be used for unspecified purposes. . . We have produced a contagion of hate, fear and suspicion in our own country that threatens to paralyze our social life. . . This policy would leave us, not with a world saved for peace and democracy and world cooperation, but with a world filled with paranoids, criminals, and corpses. This policy has already had sinister consequences on our national life, turning our own government progressively into the very image of the ruthless dictatorship we properly despise and fear."

These are the fruits of modern technology controlled by the capitalist class, a class driven by its hunger for profits and world-rule to concentrate all efforts on killing. Their "democratic" double-talk serves to cover up their intended atrocities, directed as much against the American people as any other. If you survive, you will know that atomic rockets fly in both directions — and that total war and occupation of continents mean starvation levels and totalitarian regimentation at home as well as abroad.

We Marxists give the workers' answer to Mr. Lilienthal. Yes, science can create a paradise on earth. This will happen only when the workers take control of the machine they created. When that day comes, industry will be managed by the workers, through their elected representatives — not by the capitalists and their appointed Lilienthals. The production plans will be drawn up by the workers through democratic discussion — not handed down by bureaucrats.

The workers will produce abundance, not famine. With atomic power they will water the deserts, and warm the arctic wastes. We shall have satisfying work, not agonizing toil. Security, not fear. Freedom, instead of slavery.

Subscribe to
THE MILITANT

Visit your local headquarters of the

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

AKRON—For information, write P.O. Box 1342.

BOSTON—Workers Educational Center, 10 Stuart St., open Wed. 5:30-9:00 p.m., social last Sat. of month.

BUFFALO—Militant Forum, 629 Main St., 2nd fl. Phone MAdison 3960. Every afternoon except Sun.

CHICAGO—166 W. Washington Blvd. Rm. 312-314. Daily except Sun., 11:30 to 3:30; or phone for an appointment.

CLEVELAND — Pecks Hall, 1446 E. 82nd St. (off Wade Pk. Ave.) Monthly Public Forum, 1st Sun., 8 p.m.

DETROIT—6108 Linwood Ave. Phone TY 7-6267, Mon. through Sat., 12-5 p.m.

FLINT—Socialist Workers Party Hall, 215 East Ninth Street. Phone: 2-2496. Open House Saturday evenings.

LOS ANGELES—Militant Publ. Assn., Room 326, 124 W. 6th St. Phone VAndyke 8061.

LYNN, (Mass.)—Militant Publ. Assn., 44 Central Ave., office open Tues., Wed. 7:30-9:30 p.m.

MILWAUKEE—817 N. 3rd St., 3rd fl. Sun. through Fri., 7:30-9:30 p.m. Phone Hopkins 2-5337.

MINNEAPOLIS—10 So. 4th St. Phone Main 7781. Daily except Sun., 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Library, bookstore.

NEW BRITAIN, (Conn.) — For information write P. D. Box No. 659 or phone 3-3287.

NEW HAVEN—For information write, P.O. Box No. 1018.

NEWARK—428 Springfield Ave. Phone BIgelow 3-2874. Reading room. Open daily, 12-4 and 7-10 p.m.

NEW YORK CITY (Hq.)—116 University Place. Phone GR 5-8149.

HARLEM—103 W. 110 St., Rm. 23. Phone MO 2-1866. Open discussion. Friday, 8 p.m.

BRONX—Hunts Point Palace, 953 Southern Blvd; Room 25. Every Fri. night at 8:30 p.m.

BROOKLYN — Mandel's Manor, 343 Pennsylvania Ave., off Sutter, meetings every Thurs. evening at 8.

CHELSEA—130 W. 23rd St. Phone AL 5-2488.

OAKLAND (Cal.) — For information, phone TEmplebar 2-8153 or TEmplebar 2-3735, or write P. Montauk, 906-B Cypress St., Oakland 7.

PHILADELPHIA — 1303-05 W. Girard Ave., 2nd fl. Phone Stevenson 4-5820. Open daily. Forum, Fri., 8 p.m.

PITTSBURGH—1418 Fifth Ave., 2nd fl. Forums 2nd Fri. each month. Marxist class 4 p.m. every Sat. Meetings every Thurs., 7:30 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO—1739 Fillmore Ave., 4th fl. Phone FI 6-0410. Daily except Sun., 12-4:30 p.m.

ST. LOUIS — "For information, phone PR 5305."

SEATTLE—Maynard Bldg., 1st Ave., R. 201, So. & Washington. Tel. Main 9278. Mon. through Sat., 12-5 p.m. Branch meeting Tues., 7:30 p.m. Library, bookstore.

TOLEDO — Monthly open meeting. Fourth Tuesday, 8 p.m., Kappa Hall, 413 Summit, Room 2.

WORCESTER, (Mass.) — For information write P.O. Box 554, Worcester.

YOUNGSTOWN — 224 E. Federal St., Phone 3-1355. Wed., Fri., Sat., 1:30 to 4 p.m.

THE MILITANT

VOLUME XIII — SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1949 — NUMBER 38

A Piece of Dirty Work

By Farrell Dobbs

You won't find any mention of it in the daily papers, but there is a piece of dirty work going on down in Puerto Rico that makes the devil look like an amateur. It is a fair sample of the so-called "democratic way of life" American imperialism seeks to impose upon the whole world under the threat of atomic destruction. To get the full picture a few background facts will be helpful.

The working people of Puerto Rico toil long hours on the sugar, coffee and tobacco plantations, in the fruit orchards and in the processing plants. Golden profits from their labor pour into the tills of the American monopoly capitalists who own the island lock, stock and barrel. But for the Puerto Rican workers there is no accumulation of wealth. They know only the ugly face of poverty, only the bitter taste of economic degradation, only the grim struggle for existence.

Standing as the guardian of imperialist privilege in Puerto Rico, as the perpetuator of poverty among its inhabitants, is the government of the United States; that is, the capitalist politicians at Washington — the Trumans and the Tafts alike — who make holiday speeches about "democracy," only to act during working hours as cynical policemen of the capitalist system.

The capitalist politicians didn't ask the people of Puerto Rico if they wanted the American banks and corporations to take over their island back in 1898. That matter was settled by U. S. warships and marines. The Puerto Ricans, their right to independence having been thus brutally violated, are denied the right to vote in the election of the United States government. Yet they are compelled to submit to the laws enacted at Washington. And that brings us to the latest act of injustice against them.

When the peacetime draft law was enacted last year, the brass hats in the Pentagon cast their hungry eyes over the youth of Puerto Rico and earmarked around 212,000 of them for compulsory military service. But the Puerto Ricans, themselves plundered and impoverished by the American capitalists, bitterly resent conscription into an army that will be used to extend capitalist exploitation throughout the world and to tighten its strangle-hold on Puerto Rico. Consequently, some 60,000 Puerto Rican youth refused to register for the draft.

The capitalist politicians know they cannot jail 60,000 Puerto Ricans without causing a world-wide scandal. So they decided instead to single out a few victims and deal with them so cruelly that it would frighten others into submission. Eight draft resisters were arrested by Truman's Department of Justice. Federal Judge David Chavez, from the state of New Mexico, presided over their trial in Puerto Rico.

All were found guilty. Five got one year prison sentences; two were sentenced to two years in prison. The eighth defendant, who served three years in the U. S. Army during World War II, is lying in jail awaiting sentence.

They have appealed their case to the higher courts. A panel of federal judges from Boston will go to Puerto Rico to hear their appeal — in February 1950. Meantime they have been denied bail and will have been in jail almost a year before they can take the first step in the long, drawn-out appeal process. Nor is that all. The seven already sentenced have been taken to the United States and incarcerated in federal prisons at Atlanta and Jacksonville.

Here is an outrage against every principle of plain human decency. A people who have been mercilessly exploited, whose rights have been ruthlessly violated by the American capitalists, are now ordered — by a Congress in which they have no representation — to provide troops for an army that will be used to tighten the oppressor's grip on their own island. When they refuse, a President from Missouri causes their arrest, a judge from New Mexico presides over their trial and some more judges from Boston will hear their appeal, when they get good and ready. The victimized Puerto Ricans are denied bail and immediately imprisoned in a foreign land.

Here is an act of cruelty that deserves scathing condemnation. Here are eight victims of capitalist injustice who merit universal support.

Riesel and Goodrich

By Joseph Andrews

In his nationally syndicated column the venomous Victor Riesel has hurled the slanderous charge that the corporation-wide strike of Goodrich workers is nothing but a political maneuver by George R. Bass to win support for the presidency of the United Rubber Workers at that union's convention in Toronto Sept. 19.

A more vicious attack against striking workers and their leaders could not be conceived. It implies that the company was completely innocent of provoking the strike; moreover, Riesel's column states the strike is a "wildcat" pulled without notice, without giving the company a chance to extend the old agreement for a period. The facts give the lie to all of Riesel's accusations.

The union had negotiated with the company over a four month period. All of the many burdensome provisions of the Taft-Hartley Law were observed. A strike vote was conducted in which Goodrich workers in seven cities voted 15-to-1 to authorize a strike. The required notice of intent to strike was given. The international officers authorized the strike.

URW President H. R. Lloyd called CIO President Murray prior to the strike, according to Lloyd, and the national CIO was not only informed, but has backed the strike.

The company was warned during the last few weeks of negotiations that the expiration date of the contract was drawing near. But the company still insisted upon a whole series of contract changes which, in the words of Goodrich Local 5 Vice-President W. R. Childers, "would have turned back the pages of history and restored the conditions in the days before the CIO."

The union determined not to give up its hard-won working conditions. On Aug. 27 it had no contract; it had no alternative but to strike.

The company at no time offered to extend the old contract. George R. Bass stated publicly that had such an offer been made before the strike deadline, the union "would have been duty bound to give it serious consideration." But the company never gave the negotiators a chance to consider such a proposition.

The company moreover did not propose to delay discussion of wages and pensions until the steel or auto negotiations were concluded. The company, according to the reports of negotiations in the union paper, flatly insisted that it would not agree to any wage increase or better pensions under any conditions.

Faced with such a brick wall what could the union do but strike? Was it union politics to strike to defend the Goodrich workers from a contract which would have thrown conditions back to those of the 30's? Only a paid mercenary of the company or a corrupt hack like Victor Riesel could call this strike unjustified.

Reisel's filth was eagerly picked up by the Goodrich company, which reprinted his Aug. 29 column and mailed it to every Goodrich worker. Thus this peddler of lies serves his Wall Street masters.

As for Bass being a Trotskyist, as Riesel implies, it is well known in Akron that he is a member of the State Central Committee of the Democratic Party, a fact which automatically excludes Bass from affiliation with the Socialist Workers Party.

Thugs in Silk Hats

By Joseph Keller

Whatever the immediate outcome of Truman's "fact-finding" procedure in steel, the hearings made plain one crucial fact: the steel monopolists haven't changed since the days when the open shop reigned and every attempt of the workers to organize was crushed by bloody violence.

The steel barons remain the mortal enemies of unionism. They want nothing less than the complete submission of labor and the right to rule the industry without restraint upon their greed and power. They dream and plan for the day when they can turn on the union with club and gun and wipe it out utterly.

This was implicit in the completely arrogant and contemptuous attitude of the industry spokesmen at the hearing. It was explicit in the statement of Charles White, president of Republic Steel corporation — a statement which received the open approbation of the rest of the industry.

"And if they [the workers] think we are wrong, they strike us, see," White told the hearing. "That is the way this thing should work. It is a helluva good way to work it. . . there are worse things than a strike. Everybody gets a lot of things off their chests, and they say a lot of dirty things and they seem to feel awfully good after it is all over and they are back to work."

Some sections of the press were shocked by White's seeming endorsement of strikes as a method of settling disputes between capital and labor. But that's not what White had in mind. He was thinking of a particular strike that happened, in 1937 and the way it was "settled" so that his company, Republic Steel, certainly felt "awfully good."

White was thinking of the Little Steel Strike 12 years ago which was climaxed by the Memorial Day massacre outside the Republic Steel plant in Chicago. He was thinking back to that scene of the peaceful paraders — men, women and children — fleeing before the revolver and shot-gun volleys of the Chicago police, of the sadistic blood-lust unloosed by club-swinging cops on defenseless people, of 10 workers lying dying or dead in a sunny field, of a strike lost and a union smashed.

Charles White was Republic Steel's vice-president in charge of "operations" at the time of the Memorial Day Massacre. He handled the financial transactions involved in building a private police army, stockpiling munitions and tear gas, running an industrial espionage system. This was the basis of White's "labor policy" in 1937. It is what he and the other steel bosses want to return to.

Sooner or later, the steel corporations hope to come to grips with the union as they did in Chicago on May 30, 1937. They hope to beat it down and crush it — and they anticipate the willing aid of the forces of "law and order." These "captains of industry" like White are just thugs in silk hats whose whole social consciousness is concentrated in the tip of a blackjack.

And the ultimate goal of the Charles Whites is — fascism. That is the essence of their dream — the fascist dictatorship in which unionism itself is illegal, strikes are outlawed and the capitalist state rules with naked force as the guardian of profits. Behind Hitler, Mussolini and Franco have stood the capitalists. Behind an American Hitler, will stand the Charles Whites.

The words and attitude of the steel moguls before the hearings at Foley Square reflected the mentality and outlook of fascism. They have given due warning to American labor that they regard the class struggle as an issue of power which, in the end, will not be resolved across a conference table.

Pope Assails "Misuse Of Power" by Labor

Pope Pius XII, authoritarian ruler of the Vatican State and the world-wide Roman Catholic Church, recently delivered two speeches on labor unions.

In a radio address from Rome on Sept. 4 to a German Catholic conference, the Pope said that the conflict between the capitalists and the workers is merely "apparent" and that he looks forward to the day when unions won't be "necessary" because the workers will be transformed into a "superior unity" with the capitalists.

On Sept. 11, the Pope issued a blast against "the temptation to misuse the power of organization" by labor — a statement designed to strengthen the hand of the Italian government in pushing a bill to limit the right to strike.

He said the Catholic hierarchy recommends "the immediate drafting of a statute of public law and economic life of the whole of social life in general, according to the professional organization."

These words may be translated as the "corporative state." The "superior unity" that the Pope advocates to do away with unions has been realized already in the clerical-fascist states of Spain and Portugal.

Attempt to Smash Bell Strike with Mass Arrests

(Continued from Page 1)

However, the power of the demonstrators convinced Under-Sheriff Muisner to order the scabs back. A few who tried to crash the solid lines had to confront the angry pickets. One of the buses loaded with scabs left the area with every window smashed. The company claims some of the scabs were hurt.

The massed picket lines which blocked all gates put the company on the run, at least for the day. Bell was not prepared to meet the challenge of the mass resistance of the pickets.

But on Thursday, the company organized vigilante groups and armed them in an obvious attempt to provoke the pickets at the Bell gates. They were, however, met by flying squads of union pickets. About 50 such armed scabs were spotted by strikers who saw them assemble at a restaurant 1½ miles away from the plant. Union flying squads intercepted the scabs. Some of them were chased into a nearby housing project and into the fields. Some ten minutes after this incident, two cops fired seven shots at a detachment of ten union cars.

It was on the basis of the Wednesday and Thursday events that the capitalist press opened up a virulent assault on the union. Both the **Courier Express** and the **Buffalo Evening News** began to shriek for the blood of the strikers. They poured out columns upon columns of "bloody violence by the strikers." To this they added the usual dose of red-baiting and Trotsky-baiting. In this vile business they were joined later by the Catholic hierarchy.

BISHOP REVIEW

Bishop O'Hara went so far as to send out a special pastoral letter denouncing the strikers, which was read at all masses in all diocesan churches in the Buffalo area. In a similar vein, the Rt. Rev. Scaife, Bishop of Western New York, took the unprecedented step of issuing a special statement on the Bell strike in which he deplored the violence on the industrial front and branded it "alien to the American tradition." This attack was directed exclusively at the Bell strikers.

Dewey acted swiftly after Thursday's events. He summoned to Albany the District Attorneys of Niagara and Erie County as well as the union leaders. The union leadership knew that this was just another ruse to entice them out where they could be served with warrants for arrest. They refused to attend unless the warrants were withdrawn, which was not done. Dewey had indicated that the meeting would not be for the purpose of negotiation or mediation.

At Albany on Friday Dewey gave the local authorities carte blanche to use their combined forces and equipment and use any means within their power to put down "lawlessness." Dewey had earlier advised Niagara County Sheriff Becker that he had "unlimited power to uphold the law."

What followed later was the series of mass arrests on charges ranging from assault to violation of the state Riot Act. Almost all who were arrested on Thursday night and Friday were kept in jail incommunicado, without bail, and when bail was finally set, it was the most exorbitant on record in similar cases in this area.

In the meantime Sheriff Becker rounded up more than 100 hooligans and made them deputy sheriffs, armed to the teeth to herd the scabs entering the plant. In addition to this, Dewey ordered the counties neighboring the Niagara Frontier to pool all their resources when and if necessary. Such procedure rarely, if ever, has been employed in the State of New York.

Dewey's aim in issuing this order is to mobilize in an indirect manner as large a repressive force as could be obtained by calling out the state militia — a step which has not been taken in any labor dispute by any New York governor in at least three decades.

The scope of the mass hysteria raised by the local industrial magnates against the Bell strikers was dramatically illustrated when Buffalo's police commissioner announced that he had been "bombarded with circulars from manufacturers offering the latest equipment for policemen to cope with strikers who disturb the peace."

In spite of the unprecedented display of governmental terror, the strikers are remaining firm, although practically all the union leaders and activists are forced to operate underground. It is known that there are many "John Doe" warrants out for the arrest of other strikers whom the authorities deem "guilty" of participating in the union demonstrations.

Today's array of more than 100 deputized hooligans at the plant and the armed convoys of scabs into the plant did not dampen the spirit of the strikers, who have held up magnificently for 14 weeks against a corporation hell-bent on destruction of their union.

Deputies Herd Bell Scabs

A line of cars and buses carrying strikebreakers into the Bell Aircraft plant in Buffalo is well protected by sheriff's deputies. Meanwhile the police were hunting strike leaders to arrest them because they had tried to keep the scabs out.

Newbold Morris, Like O'Dwyer, Serves Wall St.

By Michael Bartell

SWP Candidate for Mayor of N. Y.

NEW YORK, Sept. 14 — The first campaign speech of Newbold Morris exposes completely his loyalty to the Wall Street gang that runs City Hall under the O'Dwyer administration.

Every worker's family in this city has been soaked $75 to $100 a year in added transportation costs because O'Dwyer doubled the subway fare. What does his friendly opponent, the Republican-Fusion candidate Morris have to say about this? Only that we New Yorkers "want service and we are ready to pay for it," that he could be a better manager of the tons of coins collected at the turnstiles.

Morris, who is supported by the Social Democratic Liberal Party, doesn't even bother to make promises to ease the workers' hardships. No, what he wants is just a "return to the great tradition of LaGuardia," as he puts it.

We know that most New Yorkers — the vast millions who have to work hard for those dimes that clink in the slots — are opposed to the doubled fare. The Socialist Workers Party is on their side: We call for immediate restoration of the nickel fare, modernization of the subway facilities, and their operation under the control of the subway workers.

There is only one reason why the subways run at a deficit. Morris doesn't want to bring up that embarrassing point any more than O'Dwyer does. That reason is the loot given to Wall Street bankers, who drain millions of dollars every year as interest on their subway bonds.

We, the SWP, say: Declare a moratorium on the subway bonds! Not another cent to speculators who double the cost of our transportation.

Why should we pay the bankers another penny? They have raked in billions of dollars already, under the deals made with them by every capitalist stooge in municipal office. The Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit and Interborough Rapid Transit were owned by the city way back in 1894. But the politicians invited their banking cronies to manage the subways, under a system called "Dual Contracts."

This set-up gave private companies the right to operate the city-owned lines for 75 years, at an investment cost of only $287,000,000 for the franchises, and with a guarantee of at least $.0,000,000 profit every year.

The bankers swelled their profits by letting equipment deteriorate, keeping down the wages of the subway workers, and keeping service at a minimum. The only thing they couldn't do was raise the fare, because the Dual Contracts set the fare at a nickel.

After World War I their profits went down because the subways were in terrible condition. It was the Republican-Fusion LaGuardia administration, in which Morris held the office of President of the City Council, which rescued the bankers by another deal in 1940. The poor bankers who had only taken in $450,000,000 profit on their $287,000,000 investment, were paid another $326,248,167 for the unexpired term of the franchise!

To make it worse, they were paid off in bonds bearing interest at three per cent, instead of in cash. This huge interest debt has kept the subway in the red ever since.

After 1940 the subway showed an operating profit each year with a nickel fare. In 1946, the profit was $7,000,000. But the interest for the bankers was eight times as much, $57,000,000.

The next year, when O'Dwyer began to scheme for the dime fare, he was helped immeasurably by Marcantonio's American Labor Party, which pretended that O'Dwyer would fight to the finish for the nickel ride. He finished it.

Republican Governor Dewey gave Democratic Mayor O'Dwyer the right to raise subway fares last year, without a referendum. The blame belongs to all the capitalist politicians and their fellow-conspirators in the ALP. Only the Socialist Workers Party has consistently opposed the steal of the workers' money, and demanded a moratorium on the debt.

This program will mean a return of the nickel ride and improved service, with only the Wall Street tycoons the losers.

Battle on 'Loyalty' Issue Marks NMU Convention

(Continued from Page 1)

in particular and the working class in general. In every major strike in the maritime industry the capitalist government has lined up on the side of the shipowners. In the last NMU strike Truman threatened to use the Navy to break the strike. It will be no different in the future. In that event, to whom will Curran be loyal?

Right now the government is pressing through the courts a suit to outlaw the union hiring hall. The lower courts have upheld the government's contention that the NMU hiring hall is illegal under the Taft-Hartley Act and the case is now before the Supreme Court. The union has taken the position that it will not compromise on the issue which involves its very existence. If the Supreme Court upholds the decision, as is most likely, and the government moves against the NMU hiring hall, again we ask: To whom will Curran be loyal?

Curran has indicated he will confront the convention with the alternative: Either the Kremlin or Washington; either the Moscow bureaucrats or the Wall Street capitalists. As we have pointed out previously, either choice would be fatal. **Against both these reactionary gangs must be counterposed the independent action of the American working class on both the economic and political field. The first loyalty of all union militants must be to the great and powerful working class in its struggle to advance human society to a higher level of civilization. It is in this third alternative that the future of the union rests.**

The opposition to the Curran machine at the convention is led by an independent caucus which has been able to muster a little over one-third of the votes on a number of test questions. The Stalinist caucus just about folded up after the first days of the convention and now comprises little more than a hardened nucleus. The solid core of the Curran machine is composed of delegates from the Southern ports whose virulent "anti-communism" is a thin veneer covering anti-Negro as well as anti-Semitic prejudices.

The opposition has held up remarkably well under the unceasing barrage of red-baiting from the Curran machine. The atmosphere created is one of intimidation against independent delegates who interpret Curran's "stand up and be counted" edict as a threat of reprisal against those delegates who vote "wrong."

The failure of the independent caucus, thus far, to come out clearly and sharply against both Curranism and Stalinism, has weakened the opposition by permitting the Curranites to create the impression that the caucus was a Communist Party front. Unless this impression is corrected, it can result in the serious loss of support from genuine independents.

Steel Barons Unyielding; Strike Looms

(Continued from page 1)

struggle under the tremendous handicap of the Truman board's report which would limit their aims to insurance and pensions that would cost the companies not more than 8 cents an hour average per worker and would not add a penny to their immediate incomes. How much better off the workers would have been if Murray had not saddled them with Truman's board and its recommendations. But they may be forced to fight in spite of all handicaps for the defense of their union and living standards.

The effort of Philip Murray and the other Steel Workers leaders to palm off the board's recommendations on health insurance and pensions as "a major victory" and "the most constructive thing of its kind in the history of our industry" is an obvious attempt to hoax the workers and salvage the CIO leadership's badly shattered prestige.

What Truman's board did was to recommend the absolute rock-bottom minimum of concessions. And even this crumb, according to the board, is subject to reduction in negotiations with the individual companies.

But even if the steelworkers wind up with a few pennies an hour gain by way of pensions and insurance, this in no way alters the damaging effect of the Board's report and Murray's acceptance of it on the wage aspirations of millions of workers and the negotiations in the auto, electrical, rubber and other major industries.

The pattern agreed to by the steel union leaders weakens the position of the Ford, Chrysler, Goodrich Rubber, General Electric and hundreds of thousands of other workers. The Goodrich workers, now on strike for higher wages, face a far tougher struggle. The Ford workers are forced to fight against a pattern that not only knocks out all their wage demands but offers a concession on pensions far less than Ford offered in 1947 and which was overwhelmingly rejected by the Ford workers.

It will be many months before the effect of the steel board's report, if accepted by the companies, will be fully felt. The Sept. 14 **N. Y. Times** gives a hint as to what this report paves the way for: "By going along with the board's recommendations for a joint study of pensions and thus deferring introduction of the six-cents-an-hour charge until the present contracts expired next April, the industry might provide itself with a substantial defense against union pressure for a fifth round of contract gains in its new agreement. Some observers felt the industry might 'buy' two years of labor peace for the price of one if it went along with the panel's report now."

The far-sighted steel monopolists have already figured out how to use the "fact-finders" report as a springboard for their next attack on the union.

That springboard is substantially strengthened by the economic philosophy now officially enunciated by the Truman administration through its board. As the head of one large steel company, quoted by the N. Y. **Times**, expressed it: "It [the board] threw out the cockeyed economics presented in behalf of the union by Robert Nathan. This is most gratifying, and it is also surprising as hell."

The "surprise" is due to the fact that the capitalist government board which the steel companies had charged was a "tool of the union" turned out to be the instrument of the corporations and cut the union demands to the bone. The "gratification" comes from the fact that by denying the arguments and facts of the Nathan report the board officially endorsed the propositions that higher wages will lead to depression and that wages have nothing to do with the amount of corporation profits and the increase in productivity.

Thus, the board declared that profits are inviolable; that wage demands which make an inroad on profits are not permissible; that the only time workers are justified in demanding general wage increases is when prices are rising — and not always then. The board dismisses the question of raising the standard of living. The question of higher wages is reduced to a rat-race by the workers in an effort to catch up with soaring living costs.

This 100% reactionary thinking of the Truman board will have a profound effect on the government's attitude toward union demands in the future.

PAYOFF ON 1948

The outcome of the government's latest intervention in the struggle between capital and labor throws into glaring relief the total bankruptcy of the CIO leadership's policy of dependence on the Truman administration to win gains for the workers.

It is true that the steel companies' spokesmen howled against Truman's board during the hearing as a "political" instrument of the administration and its labor supporters. But it was in fact a "political" instrument aimed against the workers.

Like all such government boards in the past, the function of this board was to prevent a strike, to tangle the union in the government machinery, to take the issue of wages and other benefits out of the hands of the workers, to whittle their demands down to a tooth-pick.

Murray asked for such a board. He gambled the fate of the CIO's whole "fourth round" demands on the hope that this Truman-appointed board would relieve him of the necessity for conducting a militant fight by granting some substantial concession for political services rendered the Truman administration by the CIO.

But Truman is first and foremost a guardian of capitalist interests. His political alliance with the labor leaders is a one-way affair. He will take all the votes labor will give him. He will promise labor everything to get those votes. But when it comes to delivering the goods, he serves the capitalist class.

The outcome of Truman's "fact-finding" intervention in the steel wage conflict has provided a striking lesson for the workers. In spite of the fact that wages have not caught up with the high cost of living and that profits are at an all-time high, Truman is committed to freezing wages and safeguarding the profits of the monopolies. An effective struggle to improve labor's living standards can be conducted not through capitalist government boards but only through the independent militant action of organized labor.